

# Categorizing and Classifying

## STUDENT OBJECTIVE

- Use classification skills to organize specific items into categories based on shared features

## RESOURCES AND PREPARATION

You will need photocopies for students of:

- **Student Lesson Summary**, p. 117
- **Teaching Model**, “All About Animals,” p. 118
- **Graphic Organizer**, Classification Organizers: Category Chart and Network Tree, p. 00
- **Practice Worksheets**, Levels A and B, pp. 119–120
- **Reteaching Worksheet**, p. 121

## Teach

1. **Categorizing and Classifying:** Point out that in our “information age,” we would not be able to make much *use* of information if we did not have good ways of organizing and making sense of it. One good way is by **classifying**. Classification involves grouping items, people, or ideas into **categories** based on shared features or attributes.

**EXAMPLE** Literature can be classified into broad categories: fiction, nonfiction.

Fiction can be classified as novel, short story, drama, narrative poem, oral tradition.

Each category can then be further subdivided into smaller categories.

- Ask students to brainstorm some subdivisions and point out that they are categories.
  - See if students can continue to subdivide and refine categories. (*Sample: works by a certain author, certain culture, time period etc.*)
  - Point out that categories can overlap—The category of “Works by Walter Dean Myers,” for example, would span both novel and short story.
2. **Teaching Categorizing and Classifying:** Pass out the **Lesson Summary** and guide students through the **Academic Vocabulary** and the **Here’s How** steps.
    - Ask groups of students to choose one of the sports and think about its qualities or attributes. Ask: *Is it played indoors or outdoors? By teams or individuals? In summer or winter? In the Olympics or not? With a ball or not? In your school or not?*
    - Once the group has decided on key features, have them find other sports that share those attributes and generate criteria to define the category.
    - Have students decide on as many categories as they need. Then have the groups fill in the chart with all the sports that meet the criteria for their categories. Tell students they can categorize the same items in different ways, depending on their purpose.
  3. **Guided Practice:** Distribute the **Teaching Model**, “All About Animals.” Read the student field trip report aloud as students follow along. Tell students their task is to first list all the animals mentioned, and then classify the animals into three categories. Use the **Lesson Summary** to guide students through the steps of classifying information.

## CATEGORIZING AND CLASSIFYING, CONTINUED

- **List:** Have students make a list of all of the animals mentioned. Then have them think about the characteristics of each. Which go together? Why? You may need to remind students of the terms “mammals” and “reptiles.”
- **Categories:** Brainstorm ways of categorizing the first item (*a lion is a mammal*) and generate criteria for including an item in this category (*must be warm-blooded, have fur and give birth to live young*). Have students come up with and define as many categories as they need to fully classify the list.
- **Chart:** Then have students fill in the graphic organizer. Students’ charts will look something like the following:

Mammals	Reptiles	Birds
<i>Lions, tigers, panthers, bears</i>	<i>Lizards, crocodiles</i>	<i>Peacocks, toucans, penguins, hummingbirds</i>

- **Tree:** Distribute copies of the **Graphic Organizer**. Have students classify the same information using the Network Tree. Tell them they may need to add or delete spokes and circles.
- **Organizing:** Ask students how the category chart or network tree might be more useful than the simple list of words. (*Sample: It is easier to remember things when they are broken down into logical categories. The chart or network tree is a good way to break down the large category of “animals” into more manageable and easily memorable subcategories.*)

**QUICK CHECK.** Ask students to do the following:

- Define classification in your own words. (*Classification means organizing information by breaking it down into categories or groups based on common qualities.*)
- Give an example of how you could classify foods they have eaten today.
- Choose different criteria to classify the same foods. (*Sample answers: meats/dairy/grains/fruits and vegetables; healthy foods/junk foods; food I liked/didn’t like.*)

## Practice and Apply

Practice activities on categorizing and classifying appear on pp. 120–121.

- Assign **Practice Worksheet A** to students who need more structured activities.
- Assign **Practice Worksheet B** to grade-level and above-level students.

### Sample Answers: Practice Worksheet A

1. *toothbrush, dental floss, mouthwash*
2. *c*
3. *things having to do with teeth/mouth*
4. *Sample filled-in category chart:*

## CATEGORIZING AND CLASSIFYING, CONTINUED

Hair care	Nail care	Tooth care	Medicine/first aid
<i>Shampoo, comb, hairbrush, hair spray</i>	<i>Nail clippers, fingernail polish, nail file</i>	<i>Toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss, mouthwash</i>	<i>Aspirin, bandages</i>

5. *Because drugstores are organized by categories, the category chart will help Janelle more quickly and easily find what she needs.*

**Sample Answers: Practice Worksheet B**

- novel / short story / drama
- A short story is a brief work of fiction that focuses on one or two major characters and on a single conflict.  
*A novel is a work of fiction that is longer and more complex than a short story.*  
*A play is meant to be performed by actors in front of an audience.*
- Completed network tree:  
**Topic:** Fiction  
**Central Oval:** Types of Fiction  
**Medium Ovals:** novel / short story / drama  
**Small Ovals:** mystery, adventure, science fiction / comedy, tragedy
- Tragedy of Julius Caesar—*drama, tragedy*; K is for Killer—*novel, mystery or detective*; Alien Invaders—*novel, science fiction*; The Comedy of Errors—*drama, comedy*
- The network tree is a better graphic because it shows the subcategories more clearly.  
*The category chart is better if you want to list examples of the main categories.*

**Assess and Reteach**

Use these guidelines to determine if students need the **Reteaching Worksheet**.

- Practice Worksheet A:** Students should answer items 1–3 and fill out the category chart correctly.
- Practice Worksheet B:** Students should answer 3 of the first 4 items correctly and write an acceptable answer to the last item.

For students who need reteaching, review the **Student Lesson Summary**. Focus on the **Academic Vocabulary** definitions and then model the **Here's How** steps using a student-generated shopping list. Then have students complete the **Reteaching Worksheet**, p. 122.

**Answer Key: Reteaching Worksheet**

<b>Herbivores</b>	<b>Carnivores</b>	<b>Omnivores</b>
1. horses, 2. sheep, 3. rabbits, 9. cows	4. foxes, 5. wolves, 6. tigers, 10. lions	7. pigs, 8. bears